

Dialogs for Young People's Societies

No. 44

IF A BODY MEET A BODY.

DIALOG

Street Scene for 11 Males and 3 Females.



By E. J. FREUND.



Price 10c per copy.
No plays exchanged.



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If a Body meet a Body.

Characters:

Mr. Colby } two loquacious ladies trying
Mrs. Shady } to say good-bye to each
other.

Mrs. Russell, poor and miserable looking.

Stone, sheriff.

Harder, lengthy and wise.

Bill, who stammers.

Griswold, a self-conceited friend.

George, buzz-saw feeder with bandaged hand.

Ben, a man with cheap jokes.

Russell, a fine clad rogue.

Livingstone, an elderly gentleman with cane.

Englishman, vewy Heenglish, don't-cher-know.

Old Nat, civil war veteran.

Pedlar with medicine case hanging from his neck.

If necessary, certain characters may be shown by same player.

Scene: some town street, where people come and go. Modern dresses and modern talk.

IF A BODY MEET A BODY.

(Stage represents a street scene in a city.)

Griswold (elderly gentleman, coming from right, meets Uncle George, coming from left, in center of stage.) Well, there you are, Uncle George. I thought you would be in bed all bundled up and sewed together, and was coming over to see you.

George. Why? what for?

Griswold. I heard you were buzz-sawed the other day.

George. I was. I was buzz-sawad, sure (holding up bandaged hand.)

Griswold. Did it hurt you much?

Geo. I lost two fingers and a thumb.

Griswold. I see you have got them tied up.

Geo. No, I have the place where they used to be tied up.

Gris. Then they are off?

Geo. Yes, a good ways off.

Gris. How did it happen?

Geo. I pushed my hand against the saw while running a narrow strip thru.

Gris. Did you keep it there very long?

Geo. No.

Gris. Did you take it right away?

Geo. Yes, all but the fingers and a thumb.

Gris. Too bad. How did it feel?

Geo. A good deal like shaking hands with a streak of lightning.

Gris. Do you think it would be a good thing if a buzz-saw could be invented that would saw without moving?

Geo. Undoubtedly.

Gris. I always took you for an experienced sawyer, who knew a little more than to touch it while in motion.

Geo. I do, but I blundered, that's all.

Gris. I hope you learned a good lesson from this accident.

Geo. I did.

Gris. What is it?

Geo. Don't trust anybody, especially not a buzz-saw. You'll surely get fooled. Good-bye (exit Geo. right. At same time Bill enters left.)

Gris. Hello, Bill. Where have you been so long? I didn't see you for at least two weeks.

Bill (coming up, extending hand, which is taken by Gris.) I—I—I—been down to Madison, t—the c—c—c—capital.

Gris. What have you been down to the capital for?

Bill. I—I—I been down t—t—t—to see t—the members of t—the l—l—legislature.

Gris. O, I see. Did you want to have a bill passed for your special good?

Bill. W—w—why, I wanted them to change the c—c—cons—s—stitution.

Gris. What's the matter with our state's constitution?

Bill. W—w—why, it's a lie, a lie, s—s—sir, I want it changed.

Gris. What! the Wisconsin State Constitution a lie? How is that?

Bill. W—w—well, t—t—the c—con—constit—t—tution guarantees to every man f—f—free s—s—sp—speech, doesn't it?

Gris. Yes, the Constitution guarantees free speech to every citizen in Wisconsin, I believe.

Bill. S—s—see? T—that is w—what I—I—I—want. I—I— want f—f—free s—speech, f—free s—s—s—speech, and I don't have it. S—s—so I want t—the c—c—con—s—stitution changed. Good-bye (off right).

Gris. (laughing good and well, while Mrs. Russell enters left, dressed like an old woman, walking slow and falteringly. Right after Mrs. Russell enter Mr. Russell and Ben.)

Russell. See that old lady. She looks as tho she is poor and feeble. Let me talk to her (steps aside and talks inaudibly with Mrs. Russell).

Ben (meanwhile walking up to Gris.) How do you do, Mr. Griswold. How are you?

Griswold. Good, very good. In fact I have never been better than I am at present.

Ben. Don't brag, Mr. Griswold. I can prove you to be a very foul man.

Gris. Me foul? I would like to see you prove it.

Ben. Listen: Whatever you say comes out of your mouth, doesn't it?

Gris. Yes.

Ben. Say snakes.

Gris. Snakes!

Ben. There now! Snakes are coming out'n your mouth (while both are laughing uproariously at the joke, Stone enters right and Harder left, scrutinizing Russell and Mrs. R., walking slowly to center.)

Russell (stepping up to center of stage). Gentlemen, here is a poor old woman who wants to get to Columbus. Let's take up a collection (passes hat around and every one except Russell puts in coin.)

Russell (counting money in hat). \$3, gentle-

men. Thank you. But I'm afraid she won't get to Columbus on this. Let's chip in some more (hands hat round and everybody, except Russell, contributes).

Russell (counting money). Good. Well, while we're at it, gentlemen, I'm a poor man but here's a quarter for the old lady. Let's put in enough to buy her a new dress (passes hat as before. Counts money.) That's a fair sum, gentlemen. Here, good lady, take this money, buy yourself a ticket to Columbus and a new dress (pours out money into Mrs. Russell's hands).

Mrs. Russell. Thank you very much, gentlemen (exit right).

Stone. Why, Russell, is that you?

Russell. So it is, so it is.

Stone. And that woman was your wife?

Russell. Well, I think it's a mighty mean man who won't chip in a quarter to buy his own wife a dress and help her off on a visit. Good-bye (off right.)

Gris. (aghast.) Well, if that isn't a dirty mean way of robbing a man on the street, my name isn't Griswold. I'm off (exit left.)

Stone (to Harder). Did you ever get fooled like that on the public highway before?

Harder. No, sir, never; I always got fooled a

little harder.

Stone. Pardon me, sir, I'm afraid I didn't catch your name just right.

Harder. My name is a very hard one to catch; perhaps it is the hardest name you ever heard.

Stone. Hardest name I ever heard? I bet you a penny my name is still harder.

Harder. All right, I'll take you up. What is your name?

Stone. My name is Stone — Amasa Stone. Stone is hard enough, isn't it, to take that penny?

Harder. Pretty hard name, but my name is Harder — Norman B. Harder. I bet my name is harder than your's. Hand me the penny.

Stone (handing him a penny). Say, you beat me. Now you better hurry off, for I am the sheriff of this town and have a mind to arrest you for beating the sheriff.

Harder. That would be hard for me, but my name is still Harder (off right). Pedlar with sample case hanging from neck, enters right).

Stone. What have you got to sell?

Pedlar. I'm selling medicine — patent medicine. Selling Radway's Ready Relief, and it's the best thing in the world. You ought to try a

bottle. It'll cure rheumatism — cure everything. Only a dollar a bottle.

Stone. And you'll sell me a bottle? All right, give me one (takes bottle from pedlar and hands over money).

Pedlar. Anything more?

Stone. Yes, sir. I want to see your license for selling goods on the street in this town. That is my duty as sheriff of this country.

Pedlar. License? I'm well aware of that (takes envelope from coat pocket, hands it over). There it is.

Stone (takes envelope, opens, unfolds, reads and returns.) I see you are provided with it. All right. Go on and sell as much as you like. — I don't know, now that I've bought this stuff, whether I shall ever use it. I reckon I will sell it back to you again. What'll you give me for it?

Pedlar. That stuff is of no use to me. I only sell it, never use it. But since you have treated me so well, I'll give you a quarter for it.

Stone. A quarter? And it was a dollar you asked of me when I bought it. All right, here it is; give me the quarter.

Pedlar (hands over money, takes bottle and puts it back in case.) Now I have a question

or two to ask you. Have you got a pedlar's license in your trousers anywheres?

Stone. I haven't use for that kind of article myself.

Pedlar. Hain't, eh? Well I guess you'll talk differently pretty soon. If I understand the law, it is a clean case of vending or hawking or pedling Radways Ready Relief on the street without a license. You know you've sold me that bottle without having a license. Come along to the mayor with me.

Stone. Say, who are ye? You are the real Yankee pedlar. All right, I'll report at the mayor's office with you (both step to left exit and are met by Englishman.)

Englishman. Hold on a minute, gentlemen. I have a bet to carry out and must ask every man I meet this fool question: What will you take to stand all night in the tower of (pointing back of him) that church?

Stone. No betting on the street, sir!

Engl. I don't bet on the street; my bet is to be carried out on the street, that's all. Well, what will you take, Mister?

Pedlar. I wouldn't do it for a dollar. What would you be willing to give?

Engl. Nothing, sir. Understand this is a bet to be paid by some other party.

Pedlar. Aw, go and fool other people (exit left).

Engl. (to Stone). What would you take to stand all night in that churh tower, sir.

Stone. I don't know for sure; I believe I'd take you and put you in the calaboose (off left).

Ben and Russell (enter from right side). Look at that crazy herring (to Englishman.) You've got your cap on wrong, sir.

Engl. Have I? (shoves cap over ear.) Gentlemen, what will you take to watch in that church tower all night?

Russell. I would be most happy to oblige you, sir, but I'm otherwise engaged and beg to be excused (exit left).

Engl. What do you take, sir?

Ben. I believe, I'd take cold (exit left).

Livingstone (enters right with cane in hand). Pardon me, sir, but can you tell me which is the opposite side of this street?

Engl. Why, that's easy, sir:—the opposite side of this street is over there (pointing to other side)—the other side.

Livingstone. That is what I thought; but while I was walking over there, a few minutes ago, I asked a man and he told me this was the opposite side.

Engl. Maybe it is. Pardon me, sir, I'm in a hurry (exit right and bumps against Uncle

Nat).

Nat. Say, Mister, look before you leap and next time bump against your own blockhead. (Englishman off— to Livingstone). How are you, old man? Haven't seen you for ever so long.

Liv. Fine, Nat, I am doing fine. But say, while I meet you — how about that old rifle that General Knox gave you. Got it still? I suppose it can shoot some.

Nat. You mean the one that I had to fire salted bullets from? Pshaw, it don't matter. Let the old piece rest in its glory.

Liv. Let me hear about it. Did I understand you that you salted your bullets?

Nat. Always.

Liv. And wherefor, pray?

Nat. Because that rifle killed at such a distance that, otherwise, especially in warm weather, the game would spoil with age before I could reach it.

Liv. Say, Nat, that must be a wonderful rifle. (Pointing stick at Nat) take hold of this stick, Nat.

Nat (grabbing end of cane). Just to please you, I will.

Liv. There is a great liar at the end of this stick, Nat.

Nat. At which end is he?

Liv. Ha, ha, ha! Well, you got me again.

Now, be fair, Nat, and try to tell the truth just for once. What do you do for a living?

Nat. I'm a driver, sir.

Liv. That is, you drive a wagon?

Nat. No, sir, I do not.

Liv. Why, Nat, you told me so just a moment ago.

Nat. No, sir, I did not.

Liv. Nat, I admonish you to tell me the truth.

What are you doing for a living?

Nat. I'm driving a horse, sir. (Women's voices heard behind the scene): No, don't go yet, dearie, come along.

Liv. (taking Nat's arm.) Come on, I see some ladies coming. Let's be off (drags Nat after him, exeunt right.)

Mrs. Colby (and Mrs. Shady enter left.) Good-bye, Mrs Shady.

Shady. Good-bye, Mrs. Colby. Come down and see us soon.

Colby. I will. Good-by.

Shady. Good-by. Don't forget to come soon.

Colby. No, I won't. Don't you forget to come up.

Shady. Be sure and bring Sarah Jane with you next time.

Colby. I will. I'd have brought her this time, but she wasn't very well. She wanted to come awfully bad.

Shady. Did she? Now that was too bad! Be sure and bring her next time.

Colby. I will. And you be sure and bring baby.

Shady. I will. I forgot to tell you that he's cut another tooth.

Colby. You don't say so! How many has he now?

Shady. Five. It makes him awfully cross.

Colby I dare say it does while we have this kind of weather.

Shady (stepping one step back). Well, good-bye. Don't forget to come down.

Colby (stepping one stride forward). No, I won't. Don't you forget to come up. Good-bye (steps to exit right and while going out) good-bye.

Shady (stepping back and while in exit.) Good-bye.

Colby (behind scene, very loud.) Good-bye.

Shady (behind scene, very loud.) Good-bye.

(Curtain)

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